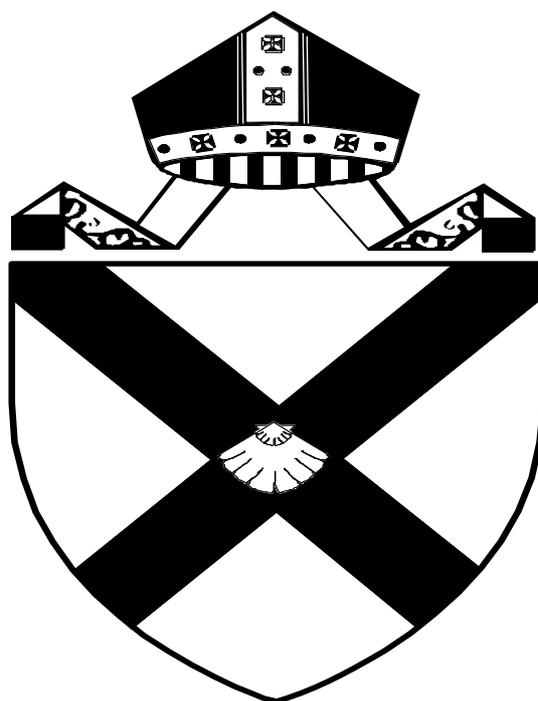


# STATUTORY INSPECTION of ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

## *ROCHESTER DIOCESE*

2011



**Hunton Church of England Primary School**

Bishops Lane, HUNTON, Kent ME15 0SJ

**Voluntary Aided**

Kent LA

Unique Reference No: 118726

Head Teacher: Sue Wood

Chair of Governors: Jacqui White

Incumbent: Rev. Peter Walker

Inspector: Jan Thompson N.S.92

Inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011

## Summary judgment

### **How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church of England School?**

Hunton Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School has maintained its outstanding status since the last inspection of December 2008.

### **Overall Grade 1: Outstanding**

#### **School Context**

This small village school is located five miles from Maidstone and has benefited in recent years from building extensions that have provided a hall and bright new classrooms. Most of its 82 pupils are from White British backgrounds, with 7% of Gypsy/Roma heritage. The school has recently attracted pupils from other faiths, whose parents wanted a church school for their children. The school is now oversubscribed, with the minority of pupils living in Hunton and others from surrounding areas. Only 5% are from church-going families. In September, the headteacher became part-time and the senior teacher now leads the school for the other two days a week. Ofsted judged it to be a good school.

#### **Established strengths**

- The caring and prayerful Christian ethos
- The well-established Religious Education (RE) syllabus
- The two-way partnership with the parish church
- The dedication and Christian leadership of the headteacher

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop further the work begun on reviewing the school's Christian values.
- Develop the classroom prayer areas to be more interactive.
- Help pupils to value religious diversity in Britain.

### **How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all its learners? Grade 1: Outstanding**

Hunton is a small school where everyone is cared for as a unique individual and 'child of God.' Parents and governors have identified the following Christian values as strongly reflected in the life of the school: thankfulness for the beauty of God's creation; compassion towards people in need; forgiveness and giving people a fresh start when they do wrong; friendship together; hopefulness; and peace. These Christian values are evident in all aspects of school life. They create a cohesive, supportive community of adults and pupils, a happy, calm working environment and pupils who behave well and work well together. Parents appreciate the caring ethos of the school and some are now selecting church secondary schools for their children because they have come to value a Christian education. Prayer is at the heart of this school and is valued by pupils and adults alike. This was very important recently, as a means of support, when a member of staff was terminally ill. Christian teaching in RE and Collective Worship, as well as a link with a church school in Malawi, help pupils to become responsible citizens. Many aspects of the school environment draw attention to the Christian foundation of the school and contribute to pupils' spiritual development. For example, pupils said that looking at the cross helped them when they felt sad. Another boy said that he felt close to God in the school's new spiritual garden, because of the Lord's Prayer inscribed on the bench. All classrooms have quiet areas for prayer and reflection, but there is little of an interactive nature.

## **What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

### **Grade 1: Outstanding**

Pupils are very enthusiastic about worship and enjoy all aspects. They appreciate opportunities for prayer and make good use of the 'prayer rainbow' display in the hall, where they post their own prayers to be used by the Rector when he leads worship once a week. They particularly like the regular visitors from different Anglican churches who lead their worship, participating in the activities and responding well to questions. Pupils take a lead in worship in a variety of ways, but particularly in the worship led by their class six times a year. They are also confident to lead others in prayer, as seen in the Year 1/2 classroom during the inspection. Pupils know that worship is offered to God and that it helps them to learn more about God. Worship is well-planned on weekly themes linked to the Bible and the Church's year and pupils are familiar with other Anglican traditions and practices, such as the responses and blessing in the Rector's worship. Year 5/6 pupils experience the Eucharist in Rochester Cathedral at the annual Church Schools Festival. The special school services held in the parish church of St Mary's are popular with pupils and their families, and give them the opportunity to experience worship in a traditional setting. The school also makes the effort to support the All-Age Sunday worship about four times a year. The headteacher, as the worship co-ordinator, manages it very well and pupils learn from this that worship is an important part of life.

### **How effective is the Religious Education (RE)? Grade 2: Good**

RE is well assessed and shows that pupils are making good progress across the school. Standards of attainment in RE are satisfactory and in line with other core subjects. The headteacher, as RE subject-leader, manages the subject very well, including regular monitoring, and has ensured that the Diocesan Syllabus is now well established. These were the only items identified under the 'focus for development' in the last report. Lessons throughout the school are well planned and adapted to the age-range in each class. A variety of learning strategies are well used by the teachers and help to make this a popular subject. RE makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development through the appropriate balance between religious content and the relating of this to pupils' own lives. For example, several pupils in Year 1/2 said that they felt God was cuddling them or holding their hand on their RE visit to the church. Pupils in Year 5/6 considered what helps them to resist temptation in a lesson on Sikhism. The Reception teacher is enthusiastic about using the RE syllabus to drive the school's Foundation Stage curriculum and the emphasis on Christianity in the Diocesan syllabus contributes to pupils' good knowledge and understanding as they go through the school. They also enjoy learning about other religions but do not appreciate its importance in multi-faith Britain.

### **How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a Church school? Grade 1: Outstanding**

Many Christian values are evident in the life of this school, but only recently have leaders and managers started to review their core values. However, the use of parent and pupil questionnaires and involvement of staff and governors ensure that the Christian life of the school is brought to the attention of all stakeholders. The toolkit to evaluate how well the school is progressing as a church school is thorough, carefully considered, supported with evidence and feeds into the school improvement plan. Governors have given particular attention to succession planning recently by granting the headteacher's request to go part-time. New members of staff are asked what they can contribute to the Christian life of the school. There is a very effective two-way partnership between the school and the parish church, and the Rector brings theological guidance to the school. The headteacher works well with all stakeholders and is a conscientious, committed and effective Christian leader of this school.